

SO THIS IS THE YEAR YOU'RE FINALLY GOING TO GET AROUND TO CLEANING OUT YOUR CUPBOARDS. CONGRATULATIONS! IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU GOT RID OF ALL THOSE RUSTY CANS AND DUSTY BOTTLES, THE OLD PICKLE JARS WITH THEIR DRIBS AND DRABS OF VARNISH, INSECTICIDE, AND WOOD PRESERVATIVE, THE PAIL FULL OF MOTOR OIL, AND ALL THE LEFTOVER LIQUIDS, POWDERS AND PASTES THAT THE CONTRACTORS DIDN'T TAKE WITH THEM AFTER THE RENOVATIONS.

BUT WAIT A MINUTE! YOU'RE NOT PLANNING TO POUR THAT STUFF DOWN THE DRAIN, ARE YOU? DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE DOING? YOU'RE POLLUTING THE ENVIRONMENT WITH HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTES.



WORD MATCH

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| A. 2 million litres | 1. Two hazardous products you may find in your house. ____ |
| B. toxic | 2. The amount of drinking water one litre of motor oil can contaminate. ____ |
| C. organic gardening | 3. A method of growing plants without using pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. ____ |
| D. 8 million tonnes | 4. Two characteristics that may make a product hazardous. ____ |
| E. groundwater contamination | 5. Environmental damage caused by improper disposal of a hazardous waste. ____ |
| F. corrosive | |
| G. used motor oil | |
| H. all-purpose cleaner | |



Be an environmental citizen:
dispose of hazardous
wastes properly.

Canada

Catalogue number En40-459/1993E
ISBN 0-662-20617-7
Cette publication est aussi disponible en français

To find more about the Environmental
Citizenship Program, write to:
Environmental Canada
Inquiry Centre
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H3



100% recycled paper,
all post-consumer fibre

CAI
EP
-2062



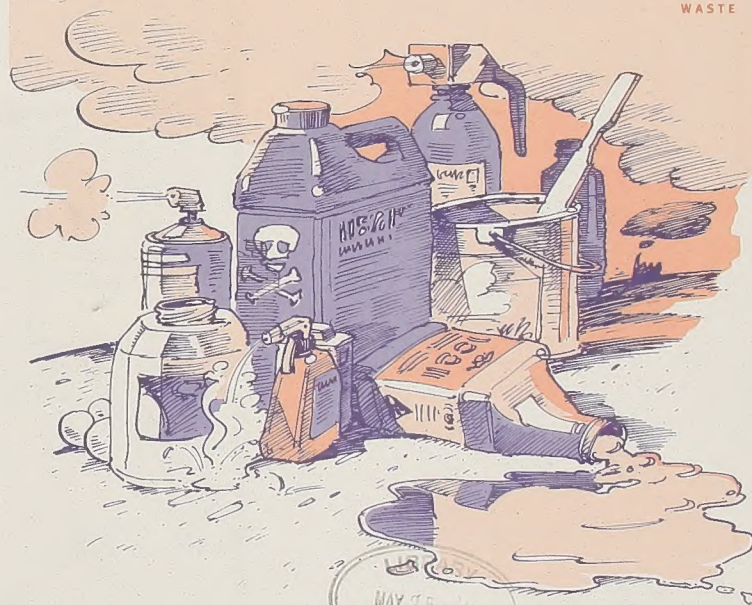
WASTE
MANAGEMENT
INFORMATION
SERIES

HAZARDOUS
WASTES

Government
Publications

Put a lid
on it:

DISPOSING
OF HOUSEHOLD
HAZARDOUS
WASTE



Environment
Canada

Environnement
Canada



Environmental
Citizenship

hazardous wastes

WHAT ARE THEY EXACTLY?

To put it simply, they are the residues of potentially harmful substances you use in your home. Hazardous wastes usually have one or more of the following characteristics; they are:



corrosive
they eat or wear away at many materials



flammable
they easily ignite



reactive
they can cause an explosion or produce deadly vapours



toxic
they are poisonous to humans and animals



DID YOU KNOW?

One litre of motor oil can contaminate two million litres of drinking water.

Most of the potentially hazardous products you buy will be marked with one or more of the above symbols.

Some examples of hazardous wastes you may find around your house:

antifreeze	insect repellent	pesticides
batteries	insecticides	pool chemicals
brake fluid	kerosene	prescription drugs
chemical strippers	lawn chemicals	solvents
chlorine bleach	lighter fluid	spot removers
contact cement	lye	stains and finishes
drain cleaners	mothballs	toilet cleaners
fire extinguishers	nail polish remover	used motor oil
flea collars and sprays	old propane tanks	oven cleaners
herbicides	paints	

You can't treat hazardous wastes like other kinds of garbage.

- Buried wastes can filter down through the soil and contaminate groundwater.
- Wastes can clog storm sewers and overburden septic systems.
- Plumbing systems can be damaged by corrosive chemicals.
- Burning hazardous wastes may simply distribute them over a larger area.
- Pouring hazardous liquids on the ground can poison soil, plants and water.

Products labelled as corrosive, flammable, reactive or toxic should be disposed of only at a hazardous waste facility. Even if they don't have warning labels, it's safe to assume that products like paint, motor oil and old propane tanks are potentially hazardous too.

Most of these wastes are produced by industry. Hazardous wastes are an unfortunate by-product of the manufacture of metals and plastics, computer equipment, dyes and paints, among other commodities.

Government regulations control the disposal of industrial hazardous wastes, but you can do your part to protect the environment by taking special care when you buy, use or dispose of potentially hazardous substances.



DO I REALLY NEED TO USE

this?

There are three questions you should ask yourself when you're shopping:

Do I really need to use this?

The "new, improved, miracle formula!" may be more hype than help.

Sometimes, the old-fashioned methods are simpler and safer. Instead of using hazardous chemicals, you could practice organic gardening techniques (do some research on companion planting, natural pest prevention and composting) or use alternative cleaning products.

DID YOU KNOW?

An estimated eight million tonnes of hazardous waste are generated in Canada every year!



How much do I really need?

Try to buy just enough to finish the job. If you must buy a large quantity, share what's left with a friend or a community group.

How will I dispose of this when I am finished?

Is using the product worth all the hassle involved in getting rid of it?

Find out where the hazardous waste disposal facility is in your community and watch for special collection days. In the meantime, store your collection of hazardous wastes out of the reach of children and pets.

Hazardous household wastes don't have to be a long-term disposal problem. The next time you have to buy a potentially hazardous product, look for the type that has been recycled. Re-refined motor oil is a good example.